

I run an Internet Access business in Des Moines, Iowa. My only option to offering high speed access in this market is to partner with Qwest via an arrangement they call being a 'MegaCentral'. This requires me buying on a long term contract an ATM circuit to their network so I may have individual DSL circuits directed to my network.

If Qwest were able to simply not offer this service, I would be bound by contract to buy access to their network which I could not use. Further, I would need to sell my DSL accounts to them as they would be the only company able to service these individuals and businesses with the existing equipment the customers have.

This would cause great economic hardship to my company as I would be obliged to pay many hundreds of dollars per month for services I can't use and I would need to forfeit thousand(s) of dollars in current revenue and any potential future revenue due to not being able to offer this type of Internet Access service.

If you are trying to level the playing field with cable companies, I suggest you open cable companies to greater access, then Qwest and others like them will not compete on the back of small providers. It would provide greater choice for consumers. If you allow Qwest to do this to small ISP providers (who have to use Qwest's methodology to provide low cost services) then there will be ONE DSL provider in my city: Qwest. There will be ONE cable provider in my city: Mediacom and people will have to deal with that circumstance.

I hope you will seriously consider the consequence of granting this request of Qwest.

I would be happy to comment further on this situation experienced by smaller ISPs.

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